TRAIL DESIGN

Green Vision

San José's Green Vision advances the local clean tech economy through 10 goals. Goal 10 delivers a 100-mile interconnected trail network by 2022.

San José is developing trails in an environmentally-sensitive manner while developing the functionality required by a growing number of pedestrians and bicyclists.

Trail design considers site conditions, material selection and performance targets.

Trail Specifications

For most projects, trails are 16' wide, consisting of a 12' wide band of asphalt concrete and 2' wide gravel shoulders. The combination provides a solid surfacing for biking and walking, a more resilient surface for jogging, and the width necessary for the occassional service vehicle. Under-crossings are paved with Portland cement concrete because it can better withstand extended periods beneath water.

Riparian Areas

Many of San José's trails are along sensitive waterways. Staff coordinates early in the design process with permitting agencies. This allows the designers to address special conditions and produce and produce a recreational projects that preserves and enhances the natural environment.

Amenities

A number of amenities support the quiet enjoyment of trails. Interpretive stations help educate about our valley's creeks and rivers, local history and other matters. Gateway structures at roadway entry points build awareness of the trail system.

Recycled Materials

The city specifies the use of recycled asphalt concrete for new trails. A feasibility study documents that recycled asphalt reduces the burden on landfills, is cost competitive and meets all existing specifications for durability.

San José's trails are a popular destination for recreation, learning and relaxing.

Innovation

San José is exploring use of l*ow heat asphalt* to reduce energy consumption. The installation method offers a better paved surface from recycled asphalt than found with traditional, high heat asphalt.

Construction signs at trail sites are 60% smaller than traditional signs, requiring less material, saving money and offering less space for vandalism.

Highly reflective striping improves evening visibility for bicyclists using lights. Traditional lighting is not permitted within sensitive riparian environments.

Community Support

Planning work on a new trail often exposes rivers and creeks heavily impacted by debris. Stormwater sewers, illegal dumping and vagrant encampments all contribute. Trail develop can support an improved condition.

1. Trails permit the community enter previously restricted sites and take a sense of ownership.
2. The Adopt-A-Trail and Water District's Adopt-A-Creek programs use volunteers to clean and restore the waterways.

Storm Water Management

Trails are designed so runoff can "sheet flow" across the surface and be captured within vegetation before entering the waterway. L ow points are avoided so concentrated flow do not occur as they can erode creek banks. Drain inlets are avoided so no "point sources" are created to deliver high water volumes that can also lead to erosion damage.

Active Transportation

Walking and biking can often be a viable alternative to a trip by car. Using active modes of travel like walking and biking can save money on gas and insurance, reduce vehicle maintenance costs and provide a great way to fit in a little exercise into your daily routine.

San José trails include award-winning signage and mileage markers to guide multiple uses along the trails, and provide a means for identifying their location.

Trail Program
www.sjparks.org/trails